The object of the chapter is to explain the various meanings
which the syllable (*Om* f may assume in the mind of a devotee,
some of them being extremely artificial and unmeaning till
at last the highest meaning of ' *Om* ' is reached, *viz..* Brahman,
the intelligent cause of the universe. This chapter contains
thirteen sections which are full of allusions to sacrificial
technicalities, all intended to show the importance of the
syllable c *Om* ', partly as a mere word used at the sacrifices^
partly as the mysterious name of the Highest Self. As every
priest at the Soma sacrifices in which three classes of priests
are always engaged, has to begin his part of the ceremony
with ' *Om* | the whole sacrifice is said to be dependent on the
syllable (9m, and to be for the glory of that syllable, as an
emblem of the Highest Self, a knowledge of whom is the
indirect result of all sacrifices. The greatness of the syllable
Om is explained by the vital breaths of the priest, the sacrificer,
and his wife ; its essence by rice, corn, *etc.,* which constitute
the oblations. Why breath and food are due to the syllable
Om, is explained by the sacrifice, which is dependent on that
syllable, ascending to the sun, the sun sending rain» rain
producing food, and food producing breath

and life.

In his ' *Abridgement of the Vedanta,'* Raja Ram Mohan Roy explains the significance of the syllable ' *Om*' thus :—

" *TJie Veda {the Upanishad} begins and concludes with the three peculiar and mysterious epithets of God,* viz., *first* OM, *second* TAT,, *third* SAT. *The first of these signifies, " That Bein^ which preserves, destroys and creates ". The second implies, " That only Being which is neither male nor female ". The third announces, €< The True Being ". These collective terms simply affirm that One Unknown, Tvue Being is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe."*

Section **II** gives the story of the dcvas and asuras contending for supremacy. They stand for the good and evil inclinations of man. The moral of the story is that the evil which men design to do to others will utiimately recoil on. themselves.